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RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC
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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: NUCLEAR ISSUES, AFGHANISTAN-PAKISTAN, COPENHAGEN; NEW DELHI.

This countrywide cable reports on relevant media reaction/opinion from India's large non-English press. The Mission reports on English-language media via email through the daily "Early Edition" summary.

NUCLEAR ISSUES

¶1. "DEAL OF EQUALITY," editorial in December 8 right-of-center Hindi daily, AMAR UJALA: "The India-Russia nuclear deal further strengthens the close relations between the two nations, while uncertainty still looms over the implementation of the U.S.-India nuclear initiative. The pact with Russia is trustworthy, and could soon be operationalized. Unlike the U.S., Russia will also give reprocessing technology and rights to India. Above all, it is a pact between two equals!"

¶2. "BEYOND AMERICA," editorial in December 9 right-of-center Urdu daily, HINDUSTAN EXPRESS: "The historic nuclear agreement with Russia is far ahead of the 123 civil nuclear agreement signed between India and the United States. One of the most important points of the Russian agreement is that reprocessing and fuel supply will not be interrupted even if India conducts nuclear tests."

¶3. "INDO-RUSSIAN AGREEMENT," editorial in December 9 right-of-center Urdu daily SIASAT: "India-Russia relations, on a decline of late, have picked up with

the signing of the historic nuclear agreement. PM Manmohan Singh has even stated that our new relationships will never be at the cost of our time-tested relationship with Russia. There was much opposition to the U.S.-India nuclear deal, but none on the deal with Russia because it is an agreement on an equal basis."

AFGHANISTAN-PAKISTAN

¶4. "OBAMA'S NEW STRATEGY TO CURB TERRORISM," op-ed in December 8 Hindi daily, RASHTRIYA SAHARA: "Although President Obama's Afghanistan-Pakistan strategy received a lukewarm response, it is an important plan to fight the world's biggest challenge -- terrorism. A surge in U.S. and NATO troops will weaken the Taliban and step up the pressure on terrorists worldwide. But the root of the problem is Pakistan. The U.S. strategy heavily depends on cooperation of Pakistan and its intelligence agency ISI. This is the biggest loophole in the policy. India should send it best wishes to President Obama. After all, the Af-Pak strategy is in our interest."

¶5. "OBAMA'S AFGHAN GAMBLE," op-ed in December 9 centrist Gujarati daily, DIVYA BHASKAR: "One fails to comprehend whether the U.S. will succeed in flushing out the Taliban in another 18 months, a task that it

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has been involved in since past eight years. The new Af-Pak strategy might also boomerang on Pakistan as the terrorists may spill over to Pakistan. The Afghan army is still not adequately equipped. Only time will tell if Obama's Af-Pak gamble will pay off."

COPENHAGEN

¶6. "FOR AN ECO-FRIENDLY TOMORROW," editorial in December 9 right-of-center Gujarati daily, MUMBAI SAMACHAR: "While the Copenhagen summit on climate change will discuss and decide on measures to curb the global warming, the pertinent question is: who will make the first move? The answer is every one of us needs to pitch in. A country with a billion plus population like India can make a huge difference. Let India set an example and become a role model by adopting eco-friendly measures."

¶7. "UPHILL TASK AT COPENHAGEN," op-ed in December 9 centrist Marathi daily, Maharashtra Times: "What would happen if under the pretext of saving the environment the developed countries start impeding the progress of the developing countries? It is feared that that is what the U.S. and Europe may be out to do in Copenhagen. Many countries, including the US, imposed sanctions on India after its nuclear test, but we did not give in. We have not crumbled to pressure from the U.S. on issues like the CTBT. We have proved that if we stay firm, the world will relent."
ROEMER